Kindly amend the claims as follows:

Cancel claims 1-9 and add the following claims 10-20:

10. A method for determining the presence or absence of Streptococcus Group A antigen in a sample, comprising:

(a) providing a lateral flow immunochromatographic device comprising a sample receiving region of porous material in liquid flow contact with a separate detection region of porous material,

wherein said detection region comprises a mobile labeling reagent at a discrete labeling situs and an immobilized capture reagent at a discrete capture situs, and

wherein said labeling reagent is a detectable label coupled to a binder which specifically binds to said antigen to form a labeled complex and said capture reagent specifically binds to said antigen or to said labeled complex;

(b) providing an assay chamber which is separate from the lateral flow immunochromatographic device;

(c) extracting said antigen from said sample with an extraction solution comprising one or two extraction reagents in said assay chamber, wherein said one extraction reagent is added to the assay chamber, to form a liquid extract, or wherein said two extraction reagents are added to said assay chamber in any order, to form a liquid extract;

(d) inserting said sample receiving region of said lateral flow immunochromatographic device into said assay chamber and contacting said liquid extract whereby said liquid extract flows through said labeling situs and then through said capture situs, without further addition of reagents or manipulation of said sample; and

(e) determining the presence or absence of said antigen in said sample by detecting the presence or absence of said detectable label at said capture situs.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein said detection region further comprises both a discrete control labeling situs comprising a mobile labeling control reagent and a discrete control capture situs comprising an immobilized control capture reagent which specifically binds to and immobilizes said mobile labeling control reagent; and wherein said method further comprises:

(f) determining the presence of said immobilized control capture reagent at said control capture situs as an internal control that the assay was performed properly.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said sample is a throat swab sample and said extracting step further comprises contacting said throat swab sample with said extraction solution in said assay chamber for at least 10 seconds.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein said sample is a throat swab sample and said extracting step further comprises vigorously mixing said throat swab in said extraction solution in said assay chamber for at least 10 seconds.

14. The method of claim 10 wherein said extraction solution comprises 0.1-2.5 M sodium nitrite and 0.01-1 M acetic acid.

15. The method of claim 10 wherein said two extraction reagents comprise a 0.2-5 M sodium nitrite solution and a 0.02-2 M acetic acid solution.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein the sodium nitrite solution comprises 2 M sodium nitrite and a pH color indicator reagent and the acetic acid solution has a concentration of 0.3 M, wherein the 0.3 M acetic acid solution is added to the 2 M sodium nitrite solution, and wherein said pH color indicator reagent changes color as the 0.3 M acetic acid solution is added to the 2 M sodium nitrite solution.

17. The method of claim 10 wherein said sample receiving region further comprises a buffer which neutralizes said liquid extract.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein the lateral flow side of said lateral flow immunochromatographic device is laminated to a backing support strip and the remaining side is not covered.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein the lateral flow side [side] of said lateral flow immunochromatographic device is laminated to a backing support strip and the remaining side is partially covered with a strip of plastic material which allows the capture situs to be visible and so as to leave a portion of said sample receiving region exposed for inserting into said assay chamber and contacting said liquid extract.

20. A method for determining the presence or absence of Streptococcus antigen in a sample, comprising:

(a) providing a lateral flow immunochromatographic device comprising a sample receiving region of porous material in liquid flow contact with a separate detection region of porous material,
wherein said detection region comprises a mobile labeling reagent at a discrete labeling situs and an immobilized capture reagent at a discrete capture situs; and
wherein said labeling reagent is a detectable label coupled to a binder which specifically binds to said antigen to form a labeled complex and said capture reagent to a binder which specifically binds to said antigen or to said labeled complex;

(b) providing an assay chamber which is separate from the lateral flow immunochromatographic device;